

## REMARKS

Claims 1-16 are pending in this Application, with claims 7-14 and 16 having been previously withdrawn. Claims 1-4 and 5 are amended above. Paragraphs 32-34 and 41 of the Specification are also amended.

### Objections to the Specification

The Examiner objects to the Specification for various informalities pertaining to numbering. In response, Applicant respectfully amends paragraphs 32-34 and 41 of the Specification.

### Claim Rejections Under 35 U.S.C. §112, second paragraph

Claims 1-6 and 15 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §112, second paragraph for being allegedly indefinite. In response, Applicant has amended the claims as shown above.

### Claim Rejections Under 35 U.S.C. §102(b)

Claim 1 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as being anticipated by United States Patent No. 4,746,258 to Loomer ("Loomer" hereinafter). Applicant respectfully traverses.

Applicant's amended claim 1 recites *inter alia*,

"a rack supporting said transport device wherein said transport device is floatingly borne in relation to said rack"

Loomer does not teach a transport device that is floatingly borne in relation to a rack that supports the transport device. Instead, referring particularly to Figures 1-3, the transport device 64 is taught to be rigidly attached to the rack 62. For at least this reason, Loomer does not teach every element of Applicant's amended claim 1.

Furthermore, Applicant's amended claim 1 also recites *inter alia*,

"a clamping device for forming a vacuum-tight seal when connected with a corresponding

clamping device on a matching module.”

Loomer does not teach a clamping device of any kind, and certainly does not disclose a clamping device for forming a vacuum-tight seal when connected with a corresponding clamping device on a matching module. Thus, for at least this additional reason, Loomer does not teach every element of Applicant’s amended claim 1.

Accordingly, for at least the reasons set forth above, Applicant respectfully submits that Loomer does not anticipate Applicant’s amended claim 1.

Claim Rejections Under 35 U.S.C. §102(e) and /or 103(a)

Claim 1 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(e) as being anticipated by United States Patent No. 6,749,800 to Muller-Ziller (“Muller-Ziller” hereinafter) or under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being obvious over Muller-Ziller in view of Loomer. Applicant respectfully traverses.

Applicant’s amended claim 1 recites *inter alia*,

“a carriage being horizontally moveable and configured to carry said rack, wherein said rack is moveably arranged with said carriage; and a clamping device for forming a vacuum-tight seal when connected with a corresponding clamping device on a matching module.”

Muller-Ziller does not teach a rack moveably arranged with a carriage. In fact, Muller-Ziller does not mention the disclosed rack 30 in any discussion of the carriage 70 (see column 6, line45 through column 7 line 32). As such, Muller-Ziller certainly does not teach the rack 30 to be moveably arranged with the carriage 70. In addition, like Loomer, Muller-Ziller does not teach a clamping device of any kind, and certainly does not disclose a clamping device for forming a vacuum-tight seal when connected with a corresponding clamping device on a matching module. Thus, for at least the above reasons, Muller-Ziller does not teach every element of Applicant’s amended claim 1. Furthermore, the combination of Loomer and Muller-Ziller does not teach each of the above discussed elements of Applicant’s amended claim 1.

Accordingly, for at least the reasons set forth above, Applicant respectfully submits that Muller-Ziller does not anticipate Applicant's amended claim 1, which, for at least the above reasons, is also not obvious over the proposed combination of Muller Ziller and Loomer.

Applicant notes that provision of the clamping device recited in Applicant's amended claim 1 is advantageous in that the clamping device allows formation of a vacuum-tight seal when connected with a corresponding clamping device on a matching module. This advantage is realized in that the clamping device's facilitation of an exact positional coupling of the transport device in relation to the matching module (like in a heat-treatment chamber as disclosed on page 2, fifth paragraph of the English translation of Applicant's description).

Claims 2-3 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being obvious over Muller-Ziller in view of United States Patent No. 4,461,455 to Mills ("Mills" hereinafter), or Muller-Ziller in view of Loomer in further view of Mills. Applicant respectfully traverses.

Applicant respectfully points out that claims 2-3 depend from Applicant's amended claim 1. Since Mills does not remedy the deficiencies of Applicant's amended claim 1, for at least the reasons set forth in the claim 1 remarks above, Applicant's claims 2-3 are not obvious over the proposed combination of Loomer, Muller-Ziller, and Mills.

Claims 4-6 and 15 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being obvious over Muller-Ziller in view of Mills in further view of United States Patent No. 5,271,678 to Bourgeot ("Bourgeot" hereinafter) or United States Patent No. 6,235,400 to Natsubori ("Natsubori" hereinafter), or Muller-Ziller in view of Loomer in further view of Mills, in further view of Bourgeot or Natsubori. Applicant respectfully traverses.

Applicant respectfully points out that claims 4-6 and 15 depend from Applicant's amended claim 1. Since neither Bourgeot nor Natsubori remedy the deficiencies of Applicant's amended claim 1, for at least the reasons set forth in the claim 1 remarks above, Applicant's

claims 4-6 and 15 are not obvious over the proposed combination of Loomer, Muller-Ziller, Mills, and Bourgeot or Natsubori.

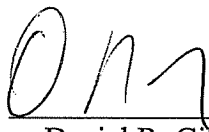
All rejections and objections are addressed above. Notice of Allowance is respectfully requested.

The Examiner is invited to contact Applicant's attorney at the below-listed phone number regarding this Response or otherwise concerning the present application.

Applicant hereby petitions for any necessary extension of time required under 37 C.F.R. §§1.136(a) or 1.136(b) which may be required for entry and consideration of the present Reply.

If there are any charges due with respect to this Amendment or otherwise, please charge them to Deposit Account No. 06-1130 maintained by Applicant's attorneys.

Respectfully submitted,  
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Date: July 19, 2007